Sub-contracting by NHAI contractors

1826. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of contractors of NHAI sub-contract their work;

(b) whether NHAI allows contractors to auction their contracts in little bits;

(c) the details of the policy of NHAI in this regard;

(d) whether it is a fact that low quality work has resulted due to such sub-contracting of work by NHAI contractors; and

(e) the steps proposed to stop this evil practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K. H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) to (c) NHAI follows FIDIC conditions of contract which stipulates that a contractor can sub-contract part of work with the permission of Engineer (Independent Supervision Consultants) and the Employer (*i.e.* NHAI).

Sub-contracting is being permitted by the Authority upto the prescribed limit as per the provisions of contract.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. Under the relevant conditions of contract (FIDIC), any approval by Engineer/NHAI for sub-contracting does not relieve the main contractor from liability or obligation under the contract and the main contractor remains responsible for the acts, defaults and negligence of the sub-contractor. As such, the work carried out by sub-contractor undergoes all the quality checks required as per the technical specifications.

Private Sector in Maritime Sector

1827. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING , ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are working out a new Maritime Policy;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(c) what is the action plan of Government to involve private sector in Maritime sector to tap its potential?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The draft policy has identified port productivity which lags behind in comparison to globally acceptable benchmarks, inadequate draught availability in entrance/ approach channels of Indian ports, inadequate hinterland connectivity, declining tonnage share of Indian flag vessels, low modal share of Inland Water Transport (IWT) in transportation of cargo, declining profile of ship-building/ship-repair industry and level of private investment including foreign direct investment amongst major areas of concern and seeks to lay down the vision and strategy for addressing these concerns. The following objectives are sought to be realized under the policy:—

(i) Holistic development of maritime transport systems through a coordinated plan and strategies for development of port infrastructure, improvement in shipping, backward integration of the hinterland through rail, road and inland water transport connectivity, augmentation of ship building and ship repair facilities so as to emerge as an internationally competitive nation in this area by 2025.

(ii) Ensure quality service comparable with international benchmarks in Indian ports through modernization, improvement in productivity and structural reforms.

(iii) Facilitate transhipment of Indian origin/bound cargo in Indian ports.

(iv) Effect significant increase in Indian Shipping and IWT tonnage through facilitative policy interventions.

(v) Promote coastal shipping and inland water transport through a package of measures including fiscal and financial incentives.

(vi) Strengthen maritime administration and bring about regulatory frame reforms to promote good governance.

(vii) Provide level playing field to Indian stakeholders by providing fiscal regime at par with international norms and by rationalizing domestic levies.

(viii) Provide for state-of-the-art aids to navigation and requisite regulatory framework.

(ix) Encourage ship-building and ship-repair activities to become inter nationally competitive and emerge as a leading ship-building/ship-repair nation by 2025.

(x) Support ship-breaking and ship-recycling activities without compromising on environmental concerns.

(xi) Stimulate private sector investment including foreign direct investment particularly for rendering services of a commercial nature in the Maritime sector, by providing conducive environment.

(xii) Promote shipping-trade interface by evolving code of conduct for supply chain players such as freight forwarders, shipping agents, multimodal transport operators and other intermediaries.

(xiii) Develop human resources in maritime sector and market them in the context of emerging global shortage of qualified personnel in the sector.

(c) The existing policy dispensation already provides for private sector participation including foreign direct investment upto 100% in the Maritime Sector including Ports and Harbours, Merchant Shipping and Inland Water Transport. The Government's endeavour is to provide a facilitative investor friendly environment with transparent procedures and decision making process for encouraging private sector participation in the Maritime Sector. This is on-going process.

National Highways in Tamil Nadu

1828. SHRI N.R. GOVINDRAJAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the National Highways in Tamil Nadu where works relating to widening, extension and repair have been undertaken as on date during the last three years; and

(b) the time by which works on the above highways are likely to be completed?